Grindon and Thorpe Thewles Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 12th April 2022 at 6.30 pm in Grindon Parish Hall, Thorpe Thewles.

Present: Cllrs. Davies, Gillson, Lowson, Rees and Williams
In Attendance: M. Ireland, Clerk

1. **Public Forum**: No members of the public were present.

2. **Apologies:** None received

3. **Declarations of Interest**: None declared.

4. **Minutes of 14th March 2022**: Cllr Davies proposed, with Cllr Williams seconding, the approval of the minutes. All concurring, it was **resolved** to accept the minutes as a true record.

5. **Matters Arising**: (a) ***Transfer of funds from Thorpe Thewles Residents Association –*** The Clerk informed that Bank Statement for February showed the funds had been received; however, she noted that she was still not receiving the Bank Statements directly as requested of the Bank in February (b) ***Solar Fund Deed*** – The Clerk informed that she had signed the document as the Council's Proper Officer, with the Chairman acting as witness; the final fully signed document had now been received and would be kept securely. (c) ***Dropped kerbs –*** The Clerk had circulated to Councillors in advance, the proposals received from the Borough Council. Following a brief discussion, it was **resolved** to accept the proposals on the understanding that the work would be undertaken and paid for by SBC. Cllr Rees raised concern about the state of some of the dropped kerbs already in situ, which were in a poor state, especially the ones near the bus shelter and at North Close, where it was prone to flooding. **Actions:** Clerk to confirm with Cllr Gardner and SBC Officers that the proposals were acceptable, and to raise concern about the current kerbs.

6. **Maintenance & Village Improvement Committee Report:** Cllr Gilson reported that the majority of planters were now in situ ad had been planted; of the two remaining smaller planters, one was to be placed at the other side of the bus shelter and one near the Vane Arms, the final large planter would be placed at Thorpe Paddock once the site was completed.

7. **Social Activities Committee report:** Cllr Williams reported that the Easter Egg Hunt was to take place on Easter Sunday morning; 60 chocolate Easter Eggs and small gifts had been purchased and parents were being charged £1.50 per child. 42 children had been registered to date. The ages were to be hidden by 10.30am, wit the Hunt starting at 11.00am. Unfortunately, 2 of the proposed venues were no longer available, ad replacements would be considered at the next SAC meeting due to take place on 14th.
   Preparations for the Jubilee were well advanced with several fundraising activated being undertaken. The 'Race Night' held at the Hamilton Russell, on Saturday 2nd April, had been well supported and had proved so successful the Landlord of the pub was willing to host another at a future date if required. She had £125 remaining balance after taking her expenses for the food and prizes, with the balance of funds from the sale of tickets and the Tote being with the Clerk.

A 'Gin Tasting' event was planned for Saturday 14th May, to take the form of a 'Speakeasy' and held at the Parish Hall. Tickets cost £6 each, available from herself and Sarah Hillier, and covered 4 gin tasters, nibbles and a talk on The History of Gin, Participants were requested to bring their own mixers.
The sale of Football Blind Cards was on-going. Proceeds from all these activities would go towards the cost of the Jubilee events.
The Beacon Lighting on Thursday 2nd June was to take place, around 9.00pm, at the Play Park, following the Pie and Pea supper at the Parish Hall. Rob Armitage had agreed to lead the procession from the hall to the field, playing 'Amazing Grace' on his pipes. Cllr Williams noted that she was also about to ask Andy Johnson if he would lead on the Jubilee Song, and requested the Clerk forward her the details. Speakers were to be borrowed from The Hamilton Russell, and a generator hired for £20 to provide electricity as SBC was unable to accommodate this.
The 'Royal Garden Party' event to be held on Sunday 5th June, would be preceded by games for both adults and children; these would include a Scavenger Hunt, a Tug of War, etc. Residents were being requested to bring their own food and drinks, with the Parish Council providing the Jubilee cakes, prizes etc.
The Clerk noted that SBC had requested copies of the Risk Assessments for the events at the Play Park, in advance; also, should a road closure be required, this needed to be requested soon. Cllr Rees suggested that, as part of the Risk Assessment, the field be checked before each event for litter and dog waste. The entry place to the field needed to be resolved, as not everyone would be able to access the steep stairs in the Play Park.
Actions: Cllr Williams to Chair SAC Meeting on Thursday 14th April, to speak with Andy Johnson, agree with Jubilee Committee whether road closure was necessary and produce Risk Assessments; Clerk to forward to Cllr Williams the information on the Jubilee Song.

8. **Finance:** The Clerk presented the Financial Transactions and Actual against Budget Reports for the first days of April, there having been no transactions since the March meeting until the new financial year in April. She also tabled an Actual against Budget report to 31st March; these were **approved**.

Financial Transactions 1 – 12 April 2022

Receipts:	**£**	**Payments:**	**£**
SBC (Precept)	9,700.00	Helen Smith (gardening supplies)	104.10
		D.M. Ireland (Clerk & SAC expenses)	205.88
TOTAL	**9,700.00**	**TOTAL**	**309.98**

The Clerk informed that the Annual Accounts were already in preparation but could not be finalised until the Bank Statement to end of March had been received. She would be requesting Mrs. Dobson, the Internal Auditor, to check the accounts and AGAR in good time before the Annual meeting of the Parish Council on 10th May, noting that, having recently been on an update session with the External Auditors, the Internal Audit requirement was slightly different this year. Cllr Williams noted that Mrs. Dobson was shortly going on holiday but thought she would be back by 3rd May.
Action: Clerk to contact Marion Dobson to arrange Internal Audit.

9. **Ward Councillor's Report:** None Received.

10. **Correspondence:** *(a)* email from a resident raising concern about a new hedge planted at Astral Park on what was intended to be common land. Agreed Clerk to inform SBC Planning and then inform the resident of the action taken; *(b)* NALC – request for suggestions for future focus of the

NALC Smaller Councils Committee – noted; *(c)* NALC – request for information relating to the work on Civility and Respect currently being undertaken; response to include need for Parish/Town Councils to be flexible and to ensure they LISTENED to residents, other Councillors and their Clerk, even if this took more than a prescribed number of minutes as per the Standing Orders; *(d)* The Pensions Regulator informing of need to re-enrol, starting 13 August 2022 and no later than 12 January 2023 – Clerk to note; *(e)* Chess – notice of price increase of 9.6% in response to rising costs, to be implemented from 1 April 2022; *(f)* Local Government Boundary Commission – final opportunity to raise any concerns about proposed Ward and Parish boundary changes – All present found the proposals acceptable; *(g)* Personal Invitation to Clerk and guest, from SBC Mayor, to attend Annual Meeting of the Council and Mayoral Installation, 25th May at the Forum Theatre – no Councillors offered to attend; *(h)* Royal British Legion – information on Jubilee materials available – noted.

Actions: Clerk to inform SBC Planning Officers of hedge on Astral Park, and then inform complainant; To inform NALC of views of Council on issue of Civility & Respect; To re-enrol with Pensions Regulator in August; To provide feedback to Boundary Commission; To attend Mayoral Installation.

11. Planning: No new applications received.

12. **Items of Concern to Councillors:**

Cllr Rees raised concern that benches & plinths around the village needed an annual Maintenance programme, to include painting, repair etc as required. Cllr Gillson informed this was already in hand as part of the medium to long-term work plan of the Village Improvement & Maintenance Committee, but that, given the concern, he would raise the level of priority on the issue.

Cllr Williams asked whether the Parish Council could write to the Diocese of Durham in regard to the unkempt garden of No 24 North Close, a church owned property. The garden is a disgrace and neighbours had complained about an old mattress and other waste left around, and rats having being seen on the property. It was **agreed** the Clerk should write to the Diocese, copying the letter to the relevant SBC Department.

Cllr Lowson asked if the Parish Council has heard from Simon Grundy since he had attended the Parish Council meeting in January; the answer was in the negative and Councillors **agreed** the Clerk should request an update on the issues raised at that meeting.

13. **Annual Parish Meeting:** The Clerk requested Councillors agree a date and format for the event, which was a statutory requirement. Cllr Davies was concerned that the last meeting had been fairly recent (October) and another so soon would not attract younger people to attend. A number of suggestions were made as to topics which might be of interest, including the Climate Emergency/Carbon Neutral target; latest information on Covid; traffic management - particularly in relation to the developments at Wynyard and west Stockton which were already impacting on travel to work time for Thorpe Thewles residents. Councillors requested the Clerk identify any legal issues to holding the Annual Parish Meeting on a Saturday afternoon and/or in conjunction with another event. A decision on date and format to be agreed at the May meeting.

Actions: Clerk to identify legislative requirements of Annual Parish Meeting, and research possible topics/speakers.

14. Date of Next Meeting: 6.30pm Tuesday 1oth May 2022 – NB: This will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

Meeting closed at 7.55pm

Minutes Authorised By:

Minutes Seconded By:

Date: